

REMARKS

In the March 28, 2006 Office Action, claim 21 stands rejected in view of prior art, while claims 1-12 were allowed, and claims 13-20 were rejected for being indefinite. No other objections or rejections were made in the Office Action.

Status of Claims and Amendments

In response to the March 28, 2006 Office Action, Applicants have amended claims 13 and 21 as indicated above. Thus, claims 1-21 are pending, with claims 1, 13, and 21 being the only independent claims. Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for this indication of allowable subject matter and the thorough examination of this application. Further, Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for his verbal explanation of the Office Action on June 21, 2006 to Applicants' representative. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested in view of above amendments and the following comments.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §112

In item 3 of the Office Action, claims 13-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. In response, Applicants have amended claim 13 to clarify claims 13-20.

Specifically, the recitation of "said first elastic member" has been changed to -- said first elastic members --.

Applicants believe that the claims now comply with 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

In item 4 of the Office Action, claim 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,333,552 (LaMarche). In response, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection, and have included comments to support the traversal.

In particular, independent claim 21 recites that the first rotating member is axially movably and unrotatably attached to a piston. As seen on page 2 of the Office Action and as seen in Figure 3 of LaMarche, LaMarche discloses a first rotating member 28-32 that is connected to a hub 15, which is identified as a piston, via splines 34 and 35 at the inner periphery of the first rotating member. Applicants respectfully assert that according to MPEP §2111.01 that words of a claim must be given their plain meaning unless they are defined in the specification. Thus, Applicants respectfully assert that since the term “piston” is not defined in the specification in a way that could include a hub, the plain meaning of piston has not been given.

Clearly, this structure is *not* disclosed or suggested by LaMarche or any other prior art of record. It is well settled under U.S. patent law that for a reference to anticipate a claim, the reference must disclose each element of the claim within the reference. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 21, as now amended, is not anticipated by the prior art of record. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

In item 5 of the Office Action, claims 1-12 were indicated as allowed, and in item 6 of the Office Action claims 13-20 were indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for this indication of allowable subject matter and the thorough examination of this application. In response, Applicants have amended claim 13 to overcome the indefiniteness rejection.

Prior Art Citation

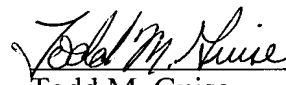
In the Office Action, an additional prior art reference was made of record. Applicants believe that this reference does not render the claimed invention obvious.

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Appl. No. 10/787,171
Amendment dated June 26, 2006
Reply to Office Action of November 7, 2005

In view of the foregoing amendment and comments, Applicants respectfully assert that claims 1-21 are now in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,


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